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ABSTRACT

Six evaluations of the elementary level social studies project The Family of Man are briefly described. In the first evaluation, conducted in Minnesota from 1967-69, taped interviews relating experimental and control group childrens' perceptions of other peoples were compared. Six major differences were noted between the groups, including an increased understanding of children in the experimental group that ways of living are learned. In the second evaluation, students in Bellevue, Washington, were queried about their knowledge of and interest in social studies. Experimental group children generally knew more and were more interested. In the third evaluation, the Speedier project in Pennsylvania, researchers concluded that teachers and students involved in The Family of Man project were more interested in social studies than ever before. In the Chelmsford, Massachusetts study, scores of fourth grade students using The Family of Man program were significantly higher than the national norm. In the fifth evaluation, test results of 700 first and second grade students in Fairfax County, Virginia, schools indicated that children in the experimental group outperformed control group children in 36 of the 40 test items. In the final evaluation, researchers concluded from data in the November 1973 issue of "Social Education" that The Family of Man had the best possible scores of any primary grade social studies program for which reports were received. (Author/DB)

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EVALUATION OF THE FAMILY OF MAN/MINNESTOA PROJECT SOCIAL STUDIES

compiled by

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I. Minnesota: Marlowe Berg Study

A. Conducted in schools in the Minneapolis-St.Paul area, 1967-1969, with children in grades 1-4.

B. Instrument used: taped interviews relating to children's perceptions of other peoples.

C. Results

1. The pupils in classes using the Project's curriculum materials made a significantly larger number of responses noting similarities between themselves and the peoples of other cultures than did children in other classes in the same schools.

2. There were no significant differences in the number of responses noting differences between themselves and other peoples of the world.

3. Children in the classes using the Project's curriculum made significantly more responses noting differences in environmental use.

4. Children in the classes using the Project's curriculum made a significantly larger number of responses calling attention to the fact that ways of living are learned.

5. Children in the classes using the Project's curriculum made comments noting differences in skin color later during the course of interviews than did those not studying these courses.

6. Rather ambiguous results were obtained from the data relating to the question, "Do children at the primary level understand cultural change?" The raw numbers indicate relatively few responses relevant to this category. The percentage, however, shows the Project groups in a more favorable light, although the differences are not statistically significant. It would seem that a number of things may have occurred: Children of this age may not be able to comprehend principles of culture change, the Project materials stressing this idea may not have been dramatic enough for this age group, or the study may not really have assessed this area. The questions asked, for example, may not have been likely, when used with still pictures, to elicit ideas about change. Indeed, it may be surprising that children suggested as frequently as they did that the ways these people live might change. Nevertheless, this sixth finding in the study has been used by the Project's staff in revising materials in the primary grades to dramatize change more clearly.

II. Bellevue, Washington: Gilbert Sax and Ted Kaltsounis study

A. An attempt to determine how children studying under the experimental program compare with children studying under the regular social studies program of the Bellevue Schools on the basis of a number of cognitive and affective measures. The following questions were to be answered:

1. Are there any differences between the experimental and control groups at the end of the experimental period as far as social studies knowledge and disposition toward social studies are concerned?

2. Is there any difference between the experimental and the control groups of the previous year as far as retention of knowledge is concerned during the period between spring and fall of 1968?

3. Is there any difference between those teachers in the experimental situation and those in the control situation in regard to their attitude toward the social studies program.

B. Instruments used

1. Primary Social Studies Test for the lower grades of the elementary school developed by Ralph C. Preston and Robert V. Duffey, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, and designed to test the social studies content most commonly taught in the lower grades of the elementary school. Administered to the fourth graders of both the experimental and control groups in the fall of 1968 and to the third graders in the spring of 1969.

2. Ranking of Subjects Survey developed by the investigators. Designed to determine the children's preference of social studies as compared to mathematics, science, English. Administered to the fourth graders (the previous year's experimental control third grade classes) in the fall of 1968 and to the third graders in the spring of 1969.

3. In addition to the instruments listed above, the investigators developed a survey which was administered to the teachers in the fall of 1968 and again in the spring of 1969. This survey was designed to determine whether there were any differences between those teachers in the experimental situation and those in the control situation in regard to their attitude toward the social studies program.

C. Results

1. In spite of the traditional orientation of the tests used, the children in the experimental group performed equal to, or better than the children in the control groups.

2. The performance of the third and fourth graders in the experimental groups was consistently superior to the performance of the third and fourth graders in the control groups.

3. The attitudes of the experimental children toward such concepts as social studies, United States of America, and school tended to be more positive than the attitudes of children in the control groups.

4. Both the experimental and the control groups showed approximately equal capability to retain what they had learned over a period of several months.

5. The attitude of teachers involved in the Bellevue Experimental Social Studies Program toward social studies in general was more positive than the attitude of those teachers in the regular program.

III. SPEEDIER: Chuck Myers study

A. Pilot social studies materials project, 1968-1970, in suburban and rural communities in South Central Pennsylvania as part of SPEEDIER Project, (Title III - ESEA).

B. Instruments used

1. Primary Social Studies Test by Houghton Mifflin, Grades 1-3

2. STEP, Social Studies Test by Educational Testing Service, Grades 4-6

3. Teacher interviews and surveys

C. Results

1. Children were far more interested in social studies than ever before.

2. Students appeared to be mastering the skills and generalizations.

3. In a number of classrooms, the children were more actively involved in the learning process.

4. Teachers adopted a variety of teaching strategies.

5. Teachers did not feel confined to a book or a specific piece of information.

IV. Chelmsford, Massachusetts: SRA/ETS Study

A. Chelmsford Public Schools implemented Minnesota Project Social Studies (now known as THE FAMILY OF MAN) in September of 1968. The social studies program at the primary grade level prior to that time had been based on the fairly traditional "expanding horizons" approach which used a text and related materials.

B. Instruments used with all grade four students

1. SRA Achievement Test: Social Studies

2. STEP II Social Studies Achievement Test

C. Results

1. Significant growth in post implementation scores after three year period (program implemented in grade one, September 1968; Fourth grade test administered in Spring 1972.) Grade four scores reported in grade equivalent norms:

Year Administered	National Norm	Chelmsford Norm
1968	4.4	4.5
1969	4.7	4.8
1970	no test administered	
1971	no test administered	
1972	4.7	5.3
1973	4.8	5.4
1974	4.7	5.4

2. Overall Chelmsford children scored significantly higher than the national norms.

3. Chelmsford children have greater ascendency over the norms as they move up from grade 4 to 5, and from grade 5 to 6 indicating a very positive cumulative effect.

4. Lower scoring children have more ascendency over the norms than high scoring children.

5. The individual test item analysis indicated that Chelmsford children at all grade levels scored significantly higher than the norms group on categories within the test such as organizing, interpreting, and evaluating information or any of the social science disciplines. This would indicate that no aspect of the social studies program is being ignored.

V. Fairfax County, Virginia: Ron Savage Study

A. Suburban Washington, D. C. residential community piloted Family of Man materials in grades 1 and 2 during the 1972-1973 school year.

B. Instrument used: Over 700 students were tested with the Primary Social Studies Test of the Fairfax Achievement Series developed by Dr. Cecil Clark, Division of Research and Testing, Fairfax County Public Schools.

C. Results

1. Children in the experimental group outperformed the control group in 36 of the 40 test items.

2. The mean score difference of over three points was significant.

3. It made no difference whether the experimental child was in grade 1 or 2, he/she still outperformed his/her control counterpart. First graders using The Family of Man even outscored the older second graders who didn't use the program.

VI. Social Education: Curriculum Information Network

A. The 1973 issue of Social Education included the first report from the CIN--Curriculum Information Network, a network of readers willing to supply evaluative information on social studies curriculum materials they were using. Although only a small number of reports were received on elementary school materials, the number of reports received on The Family of Man was comparable to that of the other elementary programs.

B. Questions asked

1. How well did these materials work with your students? Possible responses: 1.0 (always worked well) to 5.0 (Never worked well).

2. How do these materials compare with other social studies materials you have used? Possible responses: 1.0 (Much better) to 5.0 (Much worse).

3. Would you recommend these materials for use by others? 1.0 (Yes) to 3.0 (No).

C. Results

The Family of Man had the best possible scores of any primary grade social studies program for which reports were received. (Question #1: 1.0; #2: 1.4; #3: 1.4.) The program's effectiveness with students, question #1, was particularly significant.